

**Congress of the United States**  
**Washington, DC 20515**

October 2, 2003

The Honorable Ralph Regula, Chairman  
Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human Services, Education  
Committee on Appropriations  
United States House of Representatives  
2358 House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Regula:

As the Labor-HHS Appropriations Conference Committee begins its work, we urge you and your colleagues to support the Senate's proposed FY 2004 funding level for Title III of the Ryan White CARE Act--\$198,374,000.

Title III provides direct grants to 310 community-based clinics and public health providers in 41 states, Puerto Rico, the Virgin Islands, and DC, and is a key component of the CARE Act. Each year these grants provide early-intervention and ongoing comprehensive HIV medical services on an outpatient basis to more than 150,000 persons with HIV/AIDS per year. In addition, Title III clinics provide HIV counseling and testing to over 415,000 people per year. Half of these providers serve rural communities where they are frequently the only means for HIV testing and care.

The role of Title III clinics in helping people living with HIV determine their HIV status and access the care they need is especially important in light of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's recent prevention initiative, which aims to "open up the door to testing so that people can learn their status and get the appropriate treatment and prevention services that they need and deserve." Currently, there are an estimated 300,000 people living with HIV in the U.S. who are unaware of their HIV status. Many, if not most, of those diagnosed with HIV under the new CDC initiative will turn to health care providers funded through the CARE Act for their HIV-related care.

Title III is a critical component of the CARE Act's success because it supports local programs that enable people living with HIV to properly and successfully use anti-HIV medications through a comprehensive continuum of care. A strong, unflagging federal response to the domestic HIV/AIDS epidemic is the necessary response to the rising costs and complexity of care.

Chairman Regula  
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We urge you and your fellow committee members to go with the Senate's proposal and not make any cuts to Title III of the CARE Act so that this crucial program can continue to serve those most in need.

Sincerely,

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Edward J. Markey

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James E. Clyburn

Walter Rosten

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